

Title of Unit Plan: Moving West, Gold Rush & Ghost Towns

Unit Context: 5th grade, 2-3 weeks in 4th quarter, small-very rural school

Most of my activities in this unit are whole class – my class this year is only 8 students, so working with “whole class” is really, in all actuality, a small group. Teaching this with a bigger class I would definitely have some variations in grouping, as well as supports for lower level readers or ELL students.

Unit Rationale:

This unit will help my students discover what life was like for the people who crossed the continent in the mid-1800s, their reasons for doing so, and the towns that were left behind. This unit will enhance their understanding of the many different factors which contributed to the reasons people left their homes and traveled thousands of miles and endured unspeakable hardship as they sought a better life. I want my 5th graders to work with primary sources and be able to analyze and interpret them. I want them to really get a good picture in their minds of what life was like for these adventurous people who crossed our continent in search of gold. Also - I'd like them to dig deep into first-hand accounts and really put themselves in someone else's shoes.

This unit is part of my existing **social studies** curriculum in my 5th grade classroom. Fifth graders study U.S. History and Westward Expansion/Gold Rush is a great unit to focus on since we live in the West.

The students will use many different primary and secondary sources as part of this unit – maps, charts, public photos, and diary entries/excerpts. They will also be engaged in several close **readings** of the texts I have chosen, with text dependent questions being a major focus. The unit will conclude with a **writing** activity that brings it all together.

Focus Standards being Explicitly Taught and Assessed

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- W.5.1a Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- W.5.1b Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- W.5.3.A Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- W.5.3.B Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences

and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

- W.5.3.D Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.8

Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

Idaho Social Studies Content Standards:

- 5.SS.1.2.3 Analyze and discuss the motives of the major groups who participated in western expansion.
- 5.SS.1.2.5 Discuss the significant individuals who took part in western expansion.

Measurable Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- evaluate and gather information from a first person narrative.
- use a wide variety of primary source documents – such as photographs, prints, brochures and maps to understand a point of view.
- analyze, interpret and synthesize primary sources such as photographs, prints, broadsides and maps to understand a point of view through online primary sources
- integrate multiple resources to develop an understanding of westward expansion, the Gold Rush and ghost towns.
- recognize points of view in print and visual materials, including videos, images and documents.
- understand the reasons for people moving west.
- name reasons why moving west had an impact on settlers' lives.
- generalize the conditions of mining towns.

Unit Enduring Understandings Addressed:

Every choice we (as individuals or large groups) make has an impact on not only ourselves, but those around us. Some choices are hard to make, and some are easy, but all of them affect us in some way. Some decisions can change the path of an individual/family's future, or an entire country. Students will understand that the Gold Rush drew various groups of people to the West searching for prosperity. They

were part of Westward Expansion and contributed to the settlement of the western territories of the United States. These western settlers were also the people who left booming settlements and created ghost towns after they vacated. All of these pieces have made the Western United States the place it is today. Using the primary sources in this unit, my students will understand the conditions that the settlers faced as they moved around our country and made towns to settle in.

Unit Essential Questions Addressed

- Why would moving be worth the time and hardships endured?
- How were peoples' lives affected as a result of the Gold Rush?

Texts/Resources Recommended

Text and Level of Complexity

- *Stories of Young Pioneers: In Their Own Words* by Violet T. Kimball
 - There will mainly be excerpts of this book, shared aloud, read aloud by both the teacher and the students. I think my students will relate to this book well as the journal entries are written by kids not much older than my 5th graders.
- Scott Foresman Social Studies Text: *The United States* – 5th Grade Textbook – Chap. 13
- “Dame Shirley Goes to the Gold Rush” from *Journeys in Time: A New Atlas of American History* by Elspeth Leacock and Susan Buckley – 950L
 - This book is a fabulous book to have in any classroom library. The excerpt I am using is actually only two of the pages, but it's two pages packed with information and fun. The maps are a great source for the kids, and they love finding the places it talks about in the text.
- *Girl from the Gulches: The Story of Mary Ronan* - Edited by Ellen Baumler – 1200L
 - Available online as a PDF: <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/educators.asp>
 - I will mainly use excerpts from pgs. 31-49 – “Alder Gulch” for my instruction – using this whole chapter is A LOT for 5th graders and many will struggle if the entire chapter is used. This part of the book focuses on her time as a girl in Virginia City, Montana. There are lots of events in this section my students will enjoy – she talks on page 47 about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the feelings of the residents of Virginia City. The Civil War and Abe Lincoln were covered earlier in the year, so my class has background knowledge on that topic.
 - This book is definitely a push for my 5th graders, but I feel, after reading it, that they will enjoy it and be able to gain meaning out of the excerpts I have selected. The author, Mary Ronan, talks about “playing in the back streets” of Virginia City, identifying and naming flowers, and how it was “fun to startle the cottontails and to watch them dart into the underbrush.” These are all things that small town kids can identify with.
- *Ghost Towns of the American West* by Raymond Bial – 1100L
 - This book is a trade book, but also in my Scott Foresman Reading Street 2008 curriculum. It tells the story of the western mining boom towns and the reasons why they became ghost towns.

Scaffolds/Supports for Texts:

- Close reading with coding text
- Graphic organizers
- Leveled Readers from Scott Foresman Reading Curriculum

- Paired readings
- Group readings
- Using context clues for unknown words

Additional Materials Recommended

- Photographs from the Library of Congress (attached)
- “Virginia City: Where History Lives” DVD – Montana Historical Society
- Various trade books on related topics:
 - wagon trains
 - trails to the west
 - mining
 - the Gold Rush
 - ghost towns
 - diary/journals from settlers, etc.

Key Vocabulary Terms: Content and Academic

Academic Vocabulary	Content Vocabulary
<p>Review: generalize, graphic organizers, cause-and-effect relationships, inferring, prior knowledge, fact and opinion, compare/contrast</p> <p>Explicitly Taught: analyze/analysis, evidence, primary sources, integrate, point of view</p>	<p>Review: motivated, settlements, abundant, discrimination</p> <p>Explicitly Taught: wagon train, gold rush, jargon, pay dirt, sluice box, transcontinental railroad, independence, economic, overrun, vacant, scrawled, panned, stalwart, dauntless, placer mining</p>

Procedures

Time	Sequenced Activities, including evidence of text-dependent questioning
1-2 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontloading <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have students fill out the first 2 columns of the Moving West KWL chart – What I think I KNOW and What I WANT to Know. 2. Teacher read aloud an excerpt from <i>By the Great Horn Spoon</i> by Sid Fleischman – modeling fluency and building excitement for the unit. (This particular section is when Jack and Praiseworthy find “pay dirt” and pound “stakes” in four corners of the property to legally claim it.) 3. Share photographs from the Library of Congress website – the class will analyze 2-3 photos to become familiar with life in the American West from 1860-1920. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using the Photo Analysis Worksheet from the National Archives, work together/model the analysis of 1 photo. Then pass out 1 photo to each group/pair. The pair will follow the same methods as the whole class procedure. After sufficient time, come back together as a whole for students to share/discuss findings. 4. Introduce the unit essential questions with the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Why would moving be worth the time and hardships endured?</i> ✓ <i>How were peoples’ lives affected as a result of the Gold Rush?</i> 5. Write these questions on the board at the front of the room and keep them up there for the

	<p>duration of the unit.</p> <p>6. Have students brainstorm brief responses using a Record of Thinking organizer (attached). They will start with the smallest circle titled, “First, I am thinking...”</p>
1-2 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Practice <p>7. Using Social Studies text, read Chapter 13, Lesson 2: “Trails to the West.” As we read aloud and discuss, the whole class will make (both on the board and in individual journals), with teacher guiding, a cause-and-effect chart – <u>the causes of people traveling west</u> and the <u>effects of travel on settlers</u>.</p> <p>8. Pause to analyze the map in the text showing the various trails used by the settlers. Talk about the Oregon Trail passing through Idaho, and discuss the cutoff that went through our prairie – Goodale’s Cutoff. (Maybe share some photos from family’s that have lived here for a while. There are still faint traces of wagon ruts northeast of town! Share excellent map from the Craters of the Moon website. It shows the cutoff, how it bypassed the main route, and our town is shown.)</p> <p>9. Discuss any unfamiliar words using context clues and define them in our own words in students’ journals.</p> <p>10. Share (Both teacher and students) excerpts (One: Getting Ready and Two: Daily Life on the Trail) from <i>Stories of Young Pioneers</i> (or other journal/diary excerpts). Students will take notes while sharing – interesting things that stood out to them, WOW! moments, confusion, etc. (Basically using coding strategies taught earlier in the year – but this time not actually writing on the text – recording notes in students’ journals) Pass the book around, with marked passages, have students take turns reading accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Practice <p>11. After reading, students will answer questions in their journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Different groups of people moved west – Explain their reasons why using evidence from the text- modeling in the beginning how to effectively find evidence to quote. ○ According to the text, what are the pros and cons of traveling west by wagon train? ○ If you were a settler moving west during the 1840s, which of the trails would you take and why? What in the text led you to that opinion? <p>12. R.A.F.T. Letter – Using the form provided, students will assume the role of a settler moving west in the 1840s (role), and will then write a letter (format) to a family member back home (audience) about their journey by wagon train (topic).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of how to write a letter may be necessary depending on the students.
1 day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontloading <p>13. Ask students: What effect do you think the discovery of gold had on both the settlers and the places where it was discovered (California, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, etc.)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Practice <p>14. Using Social Studies text, read aloud (whole class) Chapter 13, Lesson 3: “The Golden State.” Use text dependent questions to guide the students’ reading-modeling in the beginning how to effectively find evidence to quote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ James Marshall’s discovery brought thousands of people to California – Why? ○ How do you think John Sutter felt after the news of the discovery broke out? Why? What caused him to feel that way? ○ What were the three ways people traveled to California? ○ After reading pg. 443, predict the effects on California by having so many people

	<p>move there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What facts on page 444 would support the opinion that gold mining was difficult? ○ Who was Levi Strauss, and what was his contribution to the Gold Rush? <p>15. Discuss any unfamiliar words using context clues and define them in our own words in students' journals.</p> <p>• Independent Practice</p> <p>16. After reading, students will answer questions in their journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you think the gold-mining life was what the miners expected it to be? Explain using evidence from the text. ○ Would YOU have gone to California in 1849 to search for gold? Why or why not?
1 day	<p>• Frontloading</p> <p>17. Project JUST the pictures/maps from “Dame Shirley Goes to the Gold Rush” and have students predict what this selection is about.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you predict this selection is going to be about? ○ What can you infer from this map? <p>• Building Knowledge</p> <p>18. Discuss with whole class what we have learned the last few days about heading west.</p> <p>• Guided Practice</p> <p>19. Read this selection together, discussing as we go. Stop at the numbers in the text, and find the locations on the maps. This text has numbers in red boxes dispersed throughout the text that correspond to a number on the maps. You can read the details up to a number and then go find the number and “see” where it took place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What details make this seem like a difficult journey? <p>20. Discuss any unfamiliar words using context clues and define them in our own words in students' journals.</p> <p>• Independent Practice</p> <p>21. Refer back to the Record of Thinking organizer from Day 1. Students will now fill in the 2nd circle – “Hmmm... Now I am thinking...”</p> <p>22. Also revisit the KWL chart from day 1 and see if any new questions have come up or if anything has been learned since the beginning.</p> <p>23. Using knowledge from the past few days, students make a list of the positive and negative effects for people who moved west.</p>
2-3 days	<p>• Frontloading</p> <p>24. Show a 5-minute clip from “Virginia City: Where History Lives” DVD to introduce the next reading.</p> <p>25. Then hand out the “Truths and Lies” document. Give the students a few minutes to read through the statements and determine which are truths and which are lies. If they are lies, they will need to give a brief explanation why.</p> <p>26. After sufficient time, watch the video again, but this time have the students look for the answers to the statements.</p> <p>27. Briefly talk about the answers when finished for the second time.</p> <p>• Building Knowledge</p>

	<p>28. Pass out photocopied excerpts (from pgs. 31-49 – “Alder Gulch”) of the book, <i>The Girl from the Gulches: The Story of Mary Ronan</i> (can be downloaded at: http://mhs.mt.gov/education/educators.asp)</p> <p>29. Give a brief introduction to Mary Ronan and a brief background on her life – the introduction of the book could be looked over by the teacher and pieces of it shared with the students. There are a few pictures throughout this text that could be shared on a SmartBoard or in printed form so students have an idea of who’s narrating. The second page of the book has an excellent picture of Mary at the time of her wedding. Let the students know that this section of text is about Mary Ronan’s time in Virginia City, Montana.</p> <p>• Guided Practice/Student Grouping</p> <p>30. Starting with small chunks of text, have the students individually do close readings of this text. Have them use the coding strategies set up earlier in the year (poster attached) and jot notes in the margins.</p> <p>31. After coding, have students share with a partner what they’ve identified – they may also add coding or notes to their text at this point.</p> <p>32. Come together as a class and let the students share some of their coding they identified in the text.</p> <p>33. Discuss any unfamiliar words using context clues and define them in our own words in students’ journals.</p> <p>34. Students read the text again, with their partner this time. Identifying/coding any new things they didn’t notice before, also answering/recording questions in their journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This story is told from whose point of view? How can you tell? Whose point of view is missing? How would the story be different told from another perspective? • What evidence can you find in the text that tells you what life was like as a young girl growing up in a mining town? • Look at the picture on page 42. How can this picture help us understand this text? • What generalizations can you make about children living in old, western mining towns? <p>• Independent Practice</p> <p>35. Students construct diaries (this can be done in a variety of ways; I am choosing to have the students use folded plain, white paper with construction paper covers – stapled) and assume the role of a major character from this excerpt or create a character that could have been Mary Ronan’s friend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See Rubric for formatting details. ○ Students need to use evidence from the various texts to write about their days as that character. ○ At the end of the project, a compiled list of sources should be added to show where the kids found their information. ○ This activity is probably going to take several days... I plan on continuing the unit and periodically giving them work time.
2-3 days	<p>• Frontloading</p> <p>36. Share photos on the SmartBoard of ghost towns, but don’t tell the students what they are.</p> <p>37. Do a <i>See, Think, Wonder</i> strategy with the photos. Give students several minutes to look over the 3 photos and record their observations. Then let the students share their discoveries first in small groups, then with the rest of the class.</p> <p>38. Ask students – What do you think became of those old mining towns?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Knowledge <p>39. Ask the question: What do you know about ghost towns?</p> <p>40. Students create a T-chart in their journals to compare <u>ghost towns</u> with <u>modern-day towns</u>. Give them a few minutes to brainstorm what they know about ghost towns; then make comparisons to towns/cities now.</p> <p>41. Listen to a Background Building audio on ghost towns. This segment is on a CD that is part of my Scott Foresman Reading Street curriculum – the narrator talks about ghost towns – what they are, how they came to be, etc.</p> <p>42. Have a general discussion of how settlements became ghost towns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How did the narrator describe ghost towns in the audio clip? ○ What reasons did he give as to why settlements became ghost towns? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Practice <p>43. Start reading text together as a class. Teacher read aloud the first paragraph, then have students recall what we have already learned about the Gold Rush and mining.</p> <p>44. Finish reading text together – use guided questions to comprehend the text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which details in the text help you to visualize a ghost town? ○ Who, besides miners, came west? Why? ○ What conclusions can you draw from the photograph on page 613? ○ Why was the railroad important to the survival of a mining town? ○ What generalizations does this text make about women? What facts support it? ○ What 3 reasons did the text give for why many western towns became ghost towns? ○ Make a generalization about ghost towns using evidence from the text. <p>45. Discuss any unfamiliar words using context clues and define them in our own words in students’ journals.</p>
4-5 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontloading <p>46. Explain to students their final project for this unit – <u>a poster/advertisement with a convincing argument for people to move west or NOT</u> (Maybe some kids feel really strongly about convincing people NOT to move west). They will get to choose which place they’d like to advertise for and the reason for the advertisement.</p> <p>47. Have students refer back to all of the information from the entire unit. Together, both on the board and at their seats, create a list of all the reasons that people moved west and the details surrounding each reason.</p> <p>48. Share advertisements from the past with the students; I have a few that I’ve collected over the years. I’ll be using those, but copies can be found online and through the Library of Congress website. http://www.loc.gov/index.html</p> <p>49. Discuss the components of the posters. What arguments are they showing? What is the poster’s purpose? What details did the illustrator add to make it appealing? Why did the illustrator choose NOT to show the hardships? What voice will you be using to create the poster? Who is the audience you are focusing on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Knowledge <p>50. Go over the rubric (attached) with the students. Discuss all of the expectations for this final project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Practice

51. We will have talked about various places in the west through the texts I have included, but the students will also have other resources both in the classroom and the school library to help them choose a place.
 52. The students will have time on the classroom computers to look up ideas, as well as some time in the computer lab, as a class, to search for ideas. Both the librarian and classroom teacher will be available to assist with proper research sites for 5th graders.
 53. With guidance from the teacher, students will start making rough drafts of their project using all the formative assessments and texts from this unit.
 54. The students will make use of peer edits of their rough drafts before the teacher formally checks it.
- **Independent Practice**
55. Students will work independently to create their final poster after all corrections have been made.
 56. At the end of the project, the students will work on a self assessment to explain what they have learned throughout this unit.
 57. A peer evaluation offering constructive feedback will be completed by all members of the class to see if they effectively convinced someone to move or not move west.
 58. As a final activity with the poster, have the students present and share their posters to another class
 - Not just reading the poster to the class, but explaining the meaning and background behind it.
 - Sharing their opinion and using evidence from the texts to back up their purpose.
 - Students will have done this earlier in the year, so a lot of prep work won't be necessary. They WILL need time to organize their thoughts and prepare their presentation – index cards will be used for this purpose.
 59. Refer back to the Record of Thinking organizer that was started on Day 1, as well as the KWL chart. Students will now fill in the 3rd circle – “My final thoughts...” and the final column about what they learned.

Differentiation (based on principles of UDL):
<http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl/3principles>

Multiple Modes of Representation:

- Trade Books
- 5th grade textbooks
- Video/DVD
- Audio CDs
- SmartBoard projection

Multiple Modes of Expression

- Graphic organizers
- Answering questions in journals
- Diary project
- Final poster/project – If tools are available, the option of a digital project could be offered.

Multiple Means of Engagement

- Shared reading, partner reading, close reading – different groupings
- Student choice of location for final project

Assessments

Formative

- KWL Chart – at least 3 in each column
- Photo Analysis worksheets – thoughtful answers
- Record of Thinking organizer
- Cause-and-Effect Chart – created by students in journals
- R.A.F.T. Letter – students will assume the role and write for the given purpose, format and audience
- Truths & Lies Worksheet
- See, Think, Wonder activity – Do they have valid, thoughtful questions?
- Journal questions/entries – using evidence from text
- Positive/Negative Effects list – at least 3 in each list
- Teacher observations, class discussions, group discussions – are the students able to quote directly from the text and find evidence to support their answers?
- Peer Evaluation sheets for each advertisement presented – Thoughtful and kind, but constructive feedback to their peers
- Self Assessment/Reflection – Students will critique their own posters and reflect on what they've learned through this unit.

Summative

- Diary and Entries for a major character – meet requirements stated on rubric (attached)
- Final Project/Poster – meet requirements stated on rubric (attached)
- Presentation Rubric – meet requirements stated on rubric (attached)